

is unable to make out a plausible case for the theory of the Association that the N.P. benefits the Canadian people at large. Here is the proof for this assertion:—

In its last issue our contemporary argues that Protection must be good for the Canadian farmer inasmuch as the withdrawal of the protection furnished by the Corn Laws has injured the British farmer. There is always danger in arguing that what was good for A must suit B. The proposition is at variance with the large amount of human experience wrapped up in the saying that one man's meat is another man's poison. But let that pass. THE MANUFACTURER asserts in so many words that unless the Corn Laws are revived British agriculture must perish. It is a pity it did not stop to inquire what the probable consequences of dearer bread would be to other British industries. Under the Corn Laws the price of wheat frequently reached a famine height. In 1801 it was 155 shillings per quarter of eight bushels; in 1810 it was 116 shillings; from 1801 to 1818 it averaged eighty-four shillings. This meant hunger and death itself for the poorer classes, yet the farmers did not do well. For in determining rents the landlords always based them on the highest range of the wheat prices, so that in years of plenty when the price fell down to fifty shillings or thereabouts the tenant could not make both ends meet. Let us suppose, however, that the price of wheat was artificially augmented not to 116 or to 155 shillings, but, say, by an addition of ten per cent. to the present cost. In the time of the Corn Laws there was a kindred code known as the Provision Laws, under which the importation of live cattle and dead meat was prohibited, while imported butter and lard were not allowed to be used for food, but only in the manufacture of axle-grease and sheep-tar, the customs officers being provided with a tarred stick which they thrust into each package in order to render it unfit for human consumption. Let us suppose that in addition to a wheat tax of ten per cent., a tax of ten per cent. was placed on beef, lard, butter and all other articles of food. This would be probably as small a margin of protection to the British farmer and to the other food-producers as they could be induced to accept. Now, then, what would be the result? Roughly speaking, food to the value of \$2,000,000,000 is annually consumed in the United Kingdom. This includes everything coming under the head of food. No one pretends that so vast a quantity could be raised there under a hot-house protection; whether or not, it is clear that the ten per cent. tax on foreign breadstuffs would involve an addition to the cost of the food of the British people \$200,000,000 a year, and, as before, the pressure of this load would be felt by the poor more than by the rich. It is scarcely worth while to push on to the other conclusions and show what the effect of this would be on wages and foreign trade as well as on the social and political condition of the country. In replying to a fair trader who, like THE CANADIAN MANUFACTURER, was talking at random about restoring Protection to the British farmer, Lord Salisbury said (April 13, 1888).—"I utterly disbelieve that it is in your power to introduce Protection, and if it were, I think it would be introducing a state of division among the classes of this country which would differ little from civil war." It is true, as THE MANUFACTURER says, that British agriculture is depressed, and that the depression is largely caused by the competition of cheap-labor countries which might be overcome

by a Protective system. But as the prevention would be infinitely worse than the disease in its effects upon British interests in general, is it not a waste of energy to discuss it as a practical policy?

There is a wide difference, however, between Canada and Britain in respect to the conditions under which agriculture is carried on. Britain is an importing country (at present she imports over thirty per cent. of all the food she consumes), whereas Canada is an exporting country. It follows that, in years of average plenty when we have a surplus of products to sell, neither the N.P. nor any other Protectionist contrivance can add a cent to the price received by the farmer. If we were to give him a protection of 6s. 4d. per bushel, such as the British farmers had in the sliding scale when wheat was cheap, it would not help him in the least—he would still have to take the price fixed abroad, and that price would determine the market value here at home. It may happen, of course, when there is a scarcity in Canada that the price of farm products is augmented by the N.P., for, like Britain, we are then obliged to import food for man and beast. Per contra, the N.P. alike in lean years and in fat years impoverishes and robs the farmer by artificially exalting the cost of the necessities and conveniences of life and labor. Take the case of any article in common use, cotton for instance. The specific and *ad valorem* duties levied on foreign cottons amount to an addition to their cost of probably forty per cent. on the average. That is, the native manufacturer is allowed by law to charge that much more for his cottons than the farmer could get them for were he permitted to carry on a free exchange of wheat or beef for cotton with Lancashire. He was assured that home competition would tend to keep the Canadian price down to the foreign level, and that all the manufacturers wanted Protection for was merely to enable them to start factories, so that they might secure the legitimate profits otherwise obtained by the foreigner. The formation of a "combine" has disposed of that appeal to our ignorance, and the fact remains that the N.P. taxes the farmer for the benefit of a cotton monopoly whose operations do not add a farthing to the value of his land or products. And so it is throughout the whole list—the Government holds him by the throat whilst the proprietor of each infant industry takes something out of his pocket and puts nothing back. He was promised a home market, but, as has been said above, the foreigner is the man who fixes the prices for us in normal seasons. The farmers of New England, who are surrounded by a perfect forest of tall chimneys, have found out that whilst the burdens laid upon agriculture by Protection in the manner described are grimly real, the benefits accruing to it from the multiplication of factories are in the main illusory. And, in spite of the efforts of THE MANUFACTURER to throw dust in his eyes, the Canadian farmer is rapidly coming to the same conclusion.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COST AND SELLING PRICE.

IN discussing the prevailing low prices farmers are now receiving for their produce, due notice is not taken of the fact that the cost of producing and marketing is also greatly reduced. In 1870 the average freight rate on corn from